

THE BORDER

LA FRONTERA

CREATED BY
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**SUPERNATURAL
VERSION 2.0**

a·li·en adj 1. Owing political allegiance to another country or government; foreign. 2. Belonging to, characteristic of, or constituting another and very different place, society, or person; strange. 3. Dissimilar, inconsistent, or opposed, as in nature. 4. An unnaturalized foreign resident of a country. 5. A person from another and very different family, people, or place. 6. A person who is not included in a group; an outsider.

bor·der n 1. A line that indicates a boundary. 2. The boundary line or the area immediately inside the boundary. 3. The boundary of a surface. 4. a strip forming the outer edge of something; 6. lie adjacent to another or share a boundary; "Mexico adjoins the U.S."

e·mo·tion - n. 1. An intense mental state that arises subjectively rather than through conscious effort and is often accompanied by physiological changes. 2. A state of mental agitation or disturbance; 3. The part of the consciousness that involves feeling.

e·vil - n. 1. Anything which impairs the happiness of a being or deprives a being of any good; anything which causes suffering of any kind to sentient beings; injury; mischief; harm; -- **opposed to good**.

fron·tier n 1. a wilderness at the edge of a settled area of a country. 2. an international boundary or the area (often fortified) immediately inside the boundary.

lan·guage n. 1. Communication of thoughts and feelings through a system of arbitrary signals, such as voice sounds, gestures, or written symbols. 2. Such a system including its rules for combining its components, such as words. 3. Such a system as used by a nation, people, or other distinct community; often contrasted with *dialect*.

sac·ri·fice n. 1. The act of offering something to a deity in propitiation or homage, especially the ritual slaughter of an animal or a person. 2. Hence, to destroy, surrender, or suffer to be lost, for the sake of obtaining something; to give up in favor of a higher or more imperative object or duty; to devote, with loss or suffering.

un·seen - adj 1. not seen or perceived; 2. not noticed [syn: unnoticed, unobserved] n : a belief that there is a realm controlled by a divine spirit or spirits.

The world is a dangerous place to live, not because of the people who are evil, but because of the people who don't do anything about it. – **Albert Einstein**

The belief in a supernatural source of evil is not necessary; men alone are quite capable of every wickedness. – **Joseph Conrad**

The pious pretense that evil does not exist only makes it vague, enormous and menacing. – **Aleister Crowley**

Men create gods after their own image, not only with regard to their form, but with regard to their mode of life. – **Aristotle**

“We must be willing to get rid of the life we've planned, so as to have the life that is waiting for us. The old skin has to be shed before the new one can come.” – **Joseph Campbell**

The Border is a living thing. It feeds on your greatest fears. It will cause your dreams to fester and rot. – **Anonymous**

TITLE: **The Border (La Frontera)**

TYPE: 1 Hour Drama series

GENRE: Noir Mystery/Suspense/Supernatural

STYLISTIC INFLUENCES: Twin Peaks (David Lynch) – Lost (J.J. Abrams) – Millennium (Chris Carter) – Wolf Lake (UPN) – X-Files (Chris Carter)

SETTING

El Paso, Texas / Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua - El Paso Sector - The El Paso Sector covers the entire state of New Mexico and the two western most counties in Texas, Hudspeth and El Paso. This consists of 125,500 square miles, 121,100 square miles in New Mexico and 4,500 square miles in Texas. There are 289 miles of international boundary, 180 miles are land border and 109 miles are river border.

THE BORDER is a living thing, a manmade reef teeming with life. It is filled with rules, both imposed and inherent. In its very depths it holds secrets few can see, and beneath its surface is an even darker place of power. It is an ever-shifting thing on the verge of waking and only Aubrey Houston can see it coming. As people pass across the border, they imbue it with their mythologies and their fears. It is not simply a boundary, but a cursed place, collecting the emotional energies of those that cross it. These energies give it power, power beyond the realm of most understanding.

CONCEPT

Aubrey Huston is a man with a long and distinguished career in law enforcement on **THE BORDER**. From his years as a cop on the streets of El Paso to his days as a Texas Ranger, he has seen both the good and the bad that humanity has to offer. Now nearing retirement as a Texas Ranger, his life is about to be turned upside down as he embarks on an investigation that will defy his understanding of **THE BORDER** and the people who inhabit it. A modern noir, with a touch of the supernatural, that starts with the discovery of a *buried child* but soon thrusts Aubrey into a dangerous yet ultimately humanistic journey for redemption that could tear his life apart and put those he loves in danger.

The investigation will cause him to jeopardize his career, his family, and possibly even his sanity in his relentless pursuit of the truth. Haunted by images of a *Black Dog*, Aubrey will journey ever deeper into a world he thought he knew. From human trafficking to drug smuggling, from child prostitution to modern slavery, he will come face-to-face with the deepest evils **THE BORDER** hides within its darkest reaches.

Aubrey Houston is our moral compass, separating socio-political motivations from humanizing truths. Through his determination and compassion for the truth he will take us on a journey of redemption and sacrifice, leading the viewer to an understanding that between the thin lines of black and white lays an unrelenting desert of grey. From the streets of El Paso, across **THE BORDER** to the factory worker slums of Guadalajara Izquierdo, we will see that there are many different kinds of borders that separate us and keep us from the truth.

The closer Aubrey gets to the truth the more **THE BORDER** will begin to assert its power over him. Its power and pull will begin to reveal the interconnectedness of everything. Slowly Aubrey will be able to use these glimpses of interconnection to help him solve even the most complex of crimes, ultimately leading him to the truth of everything he seeks.

With each episode, Aubrey will uncover another piece of the larger puzzle of who the *buried child* is and what secrets **THE BORDER** holds. Along the way he will have to try harder than ever before to keep his job and his family life from being swallowed by his growing obsession. Ultimately the show is an investigative supernatural crime drama set against a new and unique sociopolitical backdrop of clashing cultures and intertwining mythologies. **THE BORDER** is a noir drama intertwined with a weekly mystery/suspense driven plotline resting upon a deeper mythological journey. With the current mystery/suspense driven television environment (LOST, THE SHIELD, CSI, WITHOUT A TRACE) holding strong, a dramatically new and innovative show such as this will be readily accepted.

WEEKLY STORYLINES

- A) THE JOB – These storylines will be investigative stories as Aubrey travels around assisting local Law Enforcement. These are humanistic stories, even when they deal with the less than savory aspects of humanity. This is what Aubrey deals with everyday. Since Aubrey has been assigned permanently to **THE BORDER**, these stories will deal in many ways with immigrants and aspects of immigration. Each of these stories however, will contain some aspect that reveals to Aubrey a piece of the larger puzzle, which is the identity of the *buried child*.
- B) THE FAMILY – With every day that passes, Aubrey's obsession will begin to unravel his family life, adding pressure on him. These stories will be small moments leading to a larger fracture. Small pressures, that will slowly begin to tear him and his family further apart.
- C) THE OBSESSION – The Buried Child story. These are the small moments when Aubrey makes a connection from his current case to the overall search for the *Buried Child's* identity. These come to the forefront when Aubrey allows himself to be distracted, or after a number of smaller pieces come together to form a larger chunk.
- D) THE BORDER – Slowly Aubrey will be changed by **THE BORDER**. These stories are derived from mythology and speak to hidden power of **THE BORDER**. Sometimes this can be as simple as the Black Dog revealing itself just before a crucial connection is made by Aubrey. Sometimes these stories will be more complex and interwoven into the A storyline. They can be simple mythological beliefs by those he is assisting, or more complex stories involving **THE BORDER's** manipulation of Aubrey and his actions. It is primarily here in the background that Jericho Beldove Toomey will lurk and attempt to play havoc with Aubrey and his investigation.

LOG LINE

Can a retiring Texas Ranger keep his obsession with a new case from tearing apart his family, and destroying his career?

EPISODES**1.01 – “Buried Child”**

Aubrey wakes from a dream of a Black Dog with red eyes digging up a buried baby in the desert. He's woken from the dream by a phone call. The dream would seem to be true. As a Texas Ranger, he's being called in to help investigate. As Aubrey struggles with uncovering the identity of the *buried child*, he begins to remember the Black Dog from his past. He also begins to realize that something is allowing him to start to see how events are connected in a way that he's never been able to do before.

1.02 – “Perro Negro”

As AJ continues his search for the identity of the buried child, images of a black dog begin to plague him. We discover that he first saw it as a child when he was playing on his family's ranch near **THE BORDER**. We also discover that Aubrey saw the black dog in Vietnam as part of a reconnaissance team that crossed the border into Cambodia. Why has the black dog returned, and what does it mean? Virgil has a few ideas about it.

1.03 – “Give me your tired”

When the body of a slain factory worker from Mexico is found in a hotel room on the US side of the border, the serial murders of the women of Guadalajara Izquierdo suddenly becomes AJ's problem. Could the killer really be an American crossing into Juarez? Is it simply a killing of opportunity, or is **THE BORDER** sending AJ a message?

1.04 – “The Old Man Stories”

A detained Human Trafficker named Dotson Lenore has a story to tell AJ. As a matter of fact he asked for him by name. He says the story is iatrical to AJ understanding what is happening with **THE BORDER**. The problem is that he's buried his “cargo” somewhere in the desert and AJ has to make a choice, hear the tale the man has to tell, or get the information he needs to save the people.

1.05 – “Sins of the Father”

AJ is called to his father's farm where someone has attacked his father and burned down one of the barns. At first he thinks it is simply some sort of intimidation factor by human traffickers who wish to continue to use his father's land. He soon discovers that the barn was built atop an old cellar that may contain information connecting generations of his family to the power that **THE BORDER** holds. The question is who attacked his father, and what do they know about the contents of the cellar.

STORY NOTES

"Buried Child" - This is a rough concept of what the actual events will finally be uncovered to be.

When A.J. arrives at the scene, it is on private ranch property. He notices that the ranch owner has hung dead coyotes on his fence to warn the human "Coyotes" about using her land to transport illegal aliens across **THE BORDER**. When A.J. confronts her about this she tells A.J. that she's had her own warnings from the "Coyotes" in the form of a dead puppy left in the middle of the road leading to his ranch.

This sets up the baby as a possible warning as well.

- It is possible that the Minutemen who find the baby's grave actually have to kill a coyote that has just pulled the baby from a shallow grave. This makes the scene more disturbing and in some ways more poignant. The baby's remains are autopsied, which confirms it's Chinese and not Mexican, and also shows that the baby wasn't actually dead when it was buried because dirt is found in the lungs. The parents buried it thinking it was dead, but now it becomes a murder investigation looking for the parents whose whereabouts are unknown. Of course when they find them they would be devastated to know that they had actually killed their child. Maybe the baby was crying loudly and the "Coyote" yells back to shut the kid up, as well as pressure from the other immigrants crammed into the truck. The Mother attempts to silence the child but accidentally smothers it (see last episode of MASH). Her wailing at this discovery causes the "Coyote" to pull over and kick her and her husband out. As the truck drives off, they stand with their dead child on a dark road in the middle of nowhere. They bury their child not knowing that it isn't dead yet and walk into the desert.

The reason for the shallow grave can later be explained beyond just the hardness of the dirt, but by rural Chinese customs.

"Souls of dead infants, for instance, were customarily thought to be ghosts. Should an infant die, the parents often assumed the child had been a ghost in the guise of a child that had come to do them harm. The body of such an infant did not warrant a proper burial. In Shantung, dead infants were simply buried in shallow holes for dogs to exhume and eat. As the people of Shantung said, 'An evil spirit inhabited the child's body, otherwise it would not have died so young. If the dogs eat it, the bad spirit enters the dog and cannot again enter another child who may be born to the same parents.'"

This gives rise to the Black Dog, which is a manifestation of AJ's obsession and guilt. It is only one of the example of the Mythologies that stir within **THE BORDER** itself.

Sample scene dialogue.

AUBREY HOUSTON

The grave 's too shallow.

BORDER PATROL OFFICER

It'd take a pickaxe to dig a grave out here.

AUBREY HOUSTON

You damn well know if that were your child, you'd

bloody your hands to bury it proper. Parents are
parents.

BORDER PATROL OFFICER

Parents kill their children AJ.

AUBREY HOUSTON

Murderers (beat) not parents. This baby was swaddled.
It was loved. (beat) The dog was black wasn't it?

BORDER PATROL OFFICER

How'd you know? Said they shot it more than once, but
it didn't seem to phase it. They'd probably been
drinking. We'll find it dead near here when the sun
comes up.

AUBREY HOUSTON

No you won't.

CHARACTER PROFILESPRIMARY CHARACTERS

Aubrey Jeremiah Houston "AJ" - (60s) [Sam Elliot] – Texas Ranger– After Vietnam, he became an officer in the El Paso police department, where his partner for fifteen years was James Garza. He applied and eventually joined the Texas Rangers, with Garza only a few years behind him. They both served in Company E, due to their pre-existing knowledge of the area. Now nearing retirement in the Texas Rangers, he has seen it all. He's in his second marriage, with two boys who are constantly getting into trouble. His second wife, Aimara, is a legal immigrant from Mexico. He's set to retire, but the discovery of a buried child rekindles an unresolved case from earlier in his career leading him on a course of redemption and eventual retribution that could tear his family apart. Plagued by rekindled childhood visions of a Black Dog, he is driven to find the truth of what is happening on **THE BORDER**, and will do everything he can to stop it.

Aimara Rosa Maria Cabrera-Houston "Mara" - (40s) [Elizabeth Pena/Constance Marie] – Wife of Aubrey Houston – Came to the US in her late teens, she met A.J. in a bar where she was a waitress. She became a legal citizen upon their marrying. She currently runs a small clothing boutique. She is the mother, with A.J., of two boys. She still has family in Mexico.

Virgil Campbell – (50s) [Graham Greene/Gary Farmer] – Tigua Tribal Police – A good friend of AJ's, that AJ often consults on cultural matters. Virgil will become increasingly important to AJ as his life begins to spin out of control. Virgil has a master's degree in religious studies. A Tigua Indian, a once thought extinct tribe, he is caught between a newly recognized status and perception by others that his tribe is comprised by a group of poor Mexicans who used the government system to become recognized. In a lot of ways, he is truly a man without a country. The Tigua Nation was one of four tribes at the heart of the Abramoff scandal. When the casino was closed in 2002, 800 people lost their jobs. He's always coming up with "Indian" names for himself and seeing what people think about them.

James Michael Garza – (60s) – Minuteman – He is one of the founding members of the El Paso Sector Minutemen. He's an ex-Texas Ranger and AJ's old partner from their El Paso PD days. Although he doesn't agree with AJ, they are friends and he is often instrumental in helping AJ find information he normally would not be able to. He is a second-generation American citizen and very proud of this fact. He's completely skeptical as to what AJ feels he's experiencing with regards to the supernatural experiences AJ has begun to have.

Jessica Lamont "Jess" – (30s) - Immigration Lawyer – Originally a Criminal Defense lawyer in Brooklyn, Jess moved to El Paso recently and entered Immigration law after having been brutally attacked by one of her clients. She becomes increasingly unnerved by the stories her clients tell her about the power that reside within THE BORDER. When her and Aubrey's paths cross, they find that they are looking for the same thing.

Jericho Beldove Toomey (Viejo coyote del hombre/Old Man Coyote)– (?) [Steve Buscemi] – Trickster God – He's part of the fabric of **THE BORDER**. A malevolent trickster God of Native American mythology bent on reeking as much havoc as possible. He will become a major foil for AJ in his quest for redemption. He will also be a guide of sorts as AJ attempts to navigate the darker places nestled within the shadows of **THE BORDER**.

William Abrán Houston "Will" – (19) – Cabrera-Houston Son #1 -

Jonathan Galeno Houston – (21) – Cabrera-Houston Son #2 -

Jeremiah Samuel Houston "Sam" – (80s) [Wilford Brimley] – This is AJ's cantankerous father who never forgave AJ for not taking over the family's Ranch. Now the ranch is falling apart and he has to contend with "Coyotes" running Illegal immigrants across his land. He's a shoot first ask questions later sort of fellow. But in his past he too has seen the Black Dog, which he has kept from AJ. It would seem it runs in the family. It's a "gift" that generations of Houston's have tried to ignore and which has driven some of them mad.

"Buried Child"

TEASER

EXT. TEXAS DESERT-NIGHT

MOVING across the desert floor, illuminated by the eerie blue eye of the moon, just above the surface. FLOATING smoothly. TOWARD the SOUND of LOW GROWLING and CLAWS scratching on hard ground. PAST small gnarled bushes and the sun scorched cracked earth.

SETTLING on a BLACK DOG digging with fervor for something just below the surface. The Dog SNIFFS into the hole it's created then continues digging with renewed vigor.

FINALLY it shoves it's muzzle into the ground and begins to pull at something out. It tugs relentlessly on a piece of WHITE CLOTH.

SUDDENLY the earth releases it's grasp on a small white bundle, ending it's tug-of-war with the dog.

The dog begins to TEAR at the bundle, in a feverish fit.

The bundle begins to unravel. Small YELPS of excitement push from the dog's throat.

The bundle unravels and the dog begins to put it's contents firmly into its teeth.

Lifting it's head, the BLACK DOG turns and stares, a HUMAN INFANT gripped in it's teeth. The dog's eyes are a BLAZING RED.

SOMEWHERE, a CELL PHONE begins to RING.

SMASH CUT

INT. HOUSTON RESIDENCE-BEDROOM-CONTINUOUS

ANGLE ON AUBREY HOUSTON "AJ", (60s) as he's woken from this feverish nightmare by the RINGING phone. Aubrey sits up in bed rubbing his eyes for a second before he grabs the phone. He's fit for his age. His face is grizzled and rough like the desert floor.

The clock on the bedside table reads: 4:30 AM.

AUBREY HOUSTON

Yeah?

VOICE ON PHONE (V.O.)

AJ?

AUBREY HOUSTON

Mike?

VOICE ON PHONE (V.O.)

Sorry I woke you.

AUBREY HOUSTON

What is it?

CUT TO:

EXT. TEXAS-NIGHT-CONTINUOUS

Two large TRUCKS, tricked out for almost any terrain sit with all their lights on, including the big roof mounted lights. MIKE GARZA, (60s), stands just beyond the trucks. Mike has a bit of weight on him, but is by no means fat. He's dressed in desert tactical BDU gear but does not seem threatening. He has on a dark blue baseball cap that has a "Minuteman Logo" on it.

MIKE GARZA (V.O.)

My men found something I think
you'll want to see.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSTON RESIDENCE-BEDROOM-CONTINUOUS

A woman in the bed begins to stir. This is Aubrey's wife AIMARA CABRARA-HOUSTON, (40s). Aubrey looks over his shoulder at her and gets out of the bed so as not to wake her.

AUBREY HOUSTON

Did you call the Sheriff?

Aubrey moves out of the bedroom and down the HALLWAY,
entering THE KITCHEN.

MIKE GARZA (O.S.)

Not yet. I thought you'd want to
know about it first.

Aubrey stands in the dark kitchen in his boxers looking out
into his backyard.

AUBREY HOUSTON

What is it?

CUT TO:

EXT. TEXAS-NIGHT-CONTINUOUS

Mike isn't quite sure how to deliver this information to Aubrey.

MIKE GARZA

They shot at a dog out here AJ. It
had dug up a grave.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSTON RESIDENCE-BEDROOM-CONTINUOUS

For a moment Aubrey seems to go unsteady. His face hardens and he balances himself with his hand on the edge of the sink.

AUBREY HOUSTON

What kind of grave?

CUT TO:

EXT. TEXAS-NIGHT-CONTINUOUS

Mike looks around, moving a bit further away from the glaring lights of the trucks.

MIKE GARZA

It was an infant. Wrapped in a...

AUBREY HOUSTON (V.O.)

...white blanket.

Mike looks a bit stunned by this.

MIKE GARZA

How'd you know?

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSTON RESIDENCE-BEDROOM-CONTINUOUS

Aubrey looks like he's aged in a matter of minutes. He looks tired.

AUBREY HOUSTON

Where are you?

CUT TO:

EXT. TEXAS-NIGHT-CONTINUOUS

Mike's looking around surveying the landscape.

MIKE GARZA (V.O.)
About 500 yards from The Border on
the McKenna farm. You know it?

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSTON RESIDENCE-BEDROOM-CONTINUOUS

AUBREY HOUSTON
Yeah, I know it. You need to call
the Sheriff and the Border Patrol.

MIKE GARZA
Yeah.

AUBREY HOUSTON
I'm on my way.

Aubrey starts to disconnect the phone. Then stops.

AUBREY HOUSTON (CONT'D)
Mike? What color was the dog?

MIKE GARZA (V.O.)
I don't know. Said they shot it
more than once, but it still ran
off. We'll find it dead near here
when the sun comes up.

Aubrey hangs up the phone and stares outside. The thin line
of the rinsing sun is carving a border of light across the
horizon.

AUBREY HOUSTON
No you won't.

END OF TEASER